PAST PURSUITS

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A Newsletter of the
Special Collections Division

Akron-Summit County
Public Library

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Akron-Summit County
Public Library

PAST PURSUITS

A Hundred Years in the Making - The Summit Metro Parks Collection

BY CHERI GOLDNER, LIBRARIAN

When Summit Metro Parks observed its 90th anniversary, we published a brief history of the parks district in our Spring 2011 issue. As the organization now celebrates being "Your Back Yard for 100 Years," we thought it would be a good time to highlight the amazing Summit Metro Parks Collection that the Library is fortunate to house.

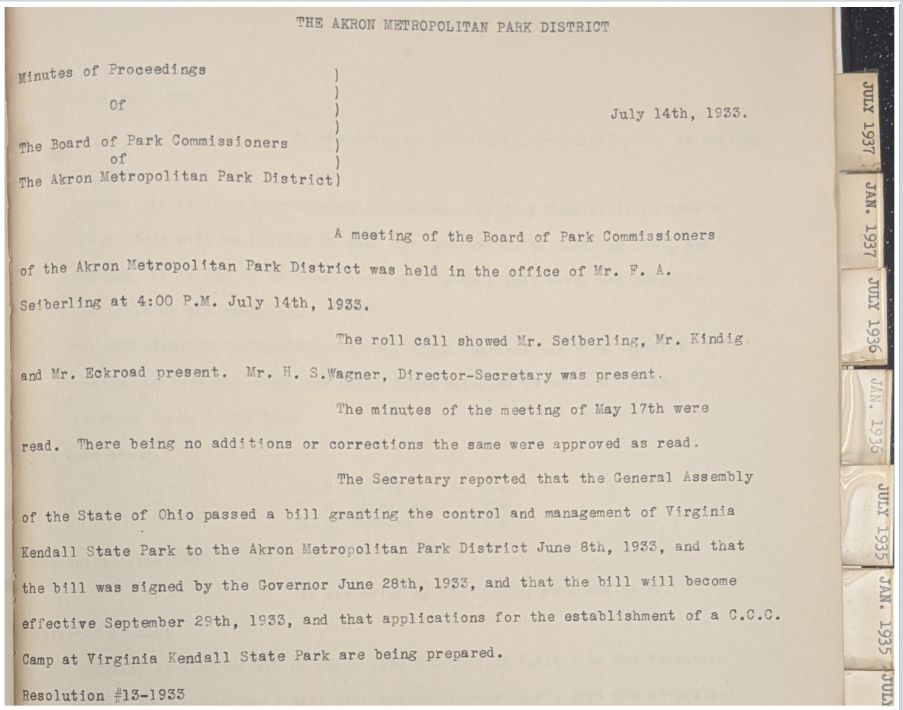
Summit Metro Parks began transferring its archival materials to the Library in 2005 and adds to the collection on a regular basis. Materials in the collection date from the establishment of the park district in 1921 to the present and include:

- Hundreds of oversized blueprints and drawings from the Planning and Development office
- Board of Commissions meeting minutes from 1926-2019
- Boxes of correspondence from Harold Stanley Wagner, who served as the organization's first Director-Secretary from 1925-1958
- Thousands of photographs documenting everything from the building of the parks' earliest structures to recent public programs
- Naturalists journals from 1966-1993 kept by Bert Szabo, whose 34-year career with the park district included serving as its first interpretive naturalist
- Publications
- Newspaper clippings

Parks intern Paul Harbalok created item-level descriptions of the oversized documents from the Planning and Development office in the Archives Catalog, while former Chief Naturalist Bert Szabo organized most of the other materials prior to their transfer to the Library. Special Collections staff update the collection's finding aid and create records in the Archives Catalog as materials are added.

Because of the size of the collection, we have processed it primarily at the folder or box level rather than at the item level. Researchers looking for items on a related topic should consult the finding aid and search the Archives Catalog to identify folders or boxes of interest and then visit the library to browse those folders or boxes. Of course, we can provide limited assistance to researchers who live out of town or are not comfortable visiting the Library right now.

Just a few of the incredible images in this collection are featured here. To see more historic photographs, view a timeline, and learn how to take the Centennial Tour, visit Summit Metro Parks' Centennial website.



THE AKRON METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT

Minutes of Proceedings
Of
The Board of Park Commissioners
of
The Akron Metropolitan Park District)

July 14th, 1933.

A meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Akron Metropolitan Park District was held in the office of Mr. F. A. Seiberling at 4:00 P.M. July 14th, 1933.

The roll call showed Mr. Seiberling, Mr. Kindig and Mr. Eckroad present. Mr. H. S.Wagner, Director-Secretary was present.

The minutes of the meeting of May 17th were read. There being no additions or corrections the same were approved as read.

The Secretary reported that the General Assembly of the State of Ohio passed a bill granting the control and management of Virginia Kendall State Park to the Akron Metropolitan Park District June 8th, 1933, and that the bill was signed by the Governor June 28th, 1933, and that the bill will become effective September 29th, 1933, and that applications for the establishment of a C.C.C. Camp at Virginia Kendall State Park are being prepared.

Resolution #13-1933

JULY 1937 JAN. 1937 JULY 1936 JAN. 1936 JULY 1935 JAN. 1935 JULY

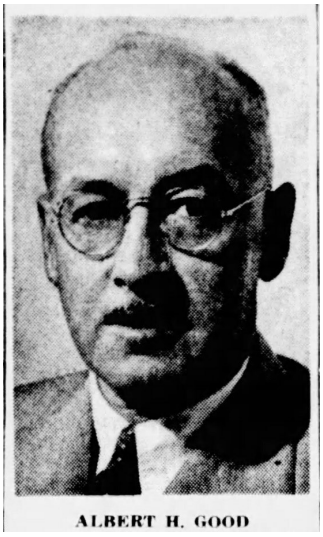
1933
Records in the Summit Metro Parks Collection document the parks' development over the years. These meeting minutes record the transfer of Virginia Kendall State Park from the State of Ohio to the Akron Metropolitan Park District (the former name of Summit Metro Parks)

February 1937
Construction workers employed by the Civilian Conservation Corps built a shelter at Gorge Metro Park within a week.

June 16, 1949
Fishing with cane poles at Alder Pond on the opening day of Goodyear Heights Metro Park.

Getting to Know... Albert Good

BY REBECCA LARSON-TROYER, LIBRARIAN



Akron Beacon Journal, November 10, 1945.

Albert H. Good was born in Akron on August 10, 1893 to William and Della (Houghton) Good. His parents both belonged to families of some standing in the community, his maternal grandfather a well-known grocer and his father's family operating various business and real estate ventures in Akron. Early in his life, Good's parents separated, eventually divorcing. He and his sister Geraldine remained with their mother, while his father traveled extensively as an inspector for the Federal Land Office.

Good graduated from Central High School and pursued a degree in architecture from Carnegie Institute of Technology, now Carnegie Mellon. He graduated in 1914, remaining in the Pittsburgh area for several years before returning to Akron and forming a partnership with fellow architect Edwin D. Wagner in 1920. Good & Wagner became one of Akron's most prominent architecture firms, designing numerous important buildings in the city, including the Y.M.C.A., Children's Hospital, the municipal building, Portage Country Club, Sunshine Cottage at Springfield Lake Sanatorium and First National Tower, the city's first skyscraper. Additionally, the firm designed a number of stately homes for Akron elite, among them John S. Knight and C. W. Seiberling. A 1923 advertising booklet, available on our website, features images of their work.

In the early 1930s, Good & Wagner designed several structures for Camp Manatoc. The project was a departure from the firm's earlier work, which most often reflected Classical, Tudor or Art Deco styles. The rustic architecture of Camp Manatoc, created with native building materials and exposed rafters and beams, was designed to be in harmony with natural surroundings. This rustic style would come to characterize Good's work for the remainder of his career. In 1934, Good left Akron for a position in Washington, D. C. as consulting architect for the National Parks Service (NPS). There he assisted with efforts in federal and state parks and, according to the Plain Dealer, "organized the setup under which the National Parks Service [...] took over the nation's historic monuments."

During his time with NPS, Good wrote and edited several texts on rustic architecture and the importance of natural aesthetics in park design. These texts included photographs, illustrations and plans that might be adapted for use in parks throughout the nation, including by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a public work relief program initiated in 1933 to provide work opportunities for young, unmarried men during the Great Depression. Good's work earned him national recognition and numerous mentions in publications that chronicle the history and importance of "parkitecture."

Good's position with NPS came on the recommendation of Harold S. Wagner (no relation to Edwin D. Wagner), director and co-founder of the Akron Metropolitan Park District, with whom Good worked during the Camp Manatoc project. The pair collaborated again when Good designed structures for Virginia Kendall Metropolitan Park, a CCC project, part of Cuyahoga Valley National Park today. The colleagues and friends corresponded extensively, their letters archived as part of the Summit County Metro Parks Collection in Special Collections. Written between 1933 and 1942, the letters span Good's years with NPS and include references to his work on various parks projects.

After a brief relocation to Chicago with the NPS, Good left the parks service, returning to Akron. He rejoined Good & Wagner, though his tenure there was brief. In 1945, he died of a heart attack at the Akron City Club at the age of 53. Albert Good is buried at Glendale Cemetery.

Special Collections Celebrates Twenty Years

BY JUDY JAMES, PAST DIVISION MANAGER, AND MARY PLAZO, DIVISION MANAGER

When planning began in the late 1990s for a new Main Library building, the Library's administration made a decision to create a new department devoted to local history and genealogy. Our forward-thinking leaders recognized the growing interest in genealogy generated in part by the Internet, along with a significant increase in requests for information about local history as good reasons to create this new department. In 1997, a small team of librarians met weekly for nearly a year to develop a vision for this new department. Working closely with the Library's administration, plans evolved to create the department. With the hiring of a manager in March of 2001, Special Collections became an official department of one full-time manager and one part-time clerk. Later that year, another staff member was hired, just in time for the big move from 55 South Main Street to our temporary location on Tallmadge Avenue. During our time on Tallmadge Avenue, we hired two more staff members, which allowed us enough personnel to staff our own reference desk at that location.

When the new Main Library was dedicated in 2004, Special Collections made its official debut. How we have grown since the days when our local history collections were housed in a chain link fenced area in the basement of the old library! With a creative, energetic, and knowledgeable staff of seven, we maintain one of the most comprehensive genealogy collections in the state of Ohio. Whether seeking an obituary or more in-depth research, family historians from near and far call, email, and visit us. Others take advantage of our classes and programs. Our local history and archival collections continue to grow as well, boasting a wide variety of materials from local individuals and organizations in all formats. The crown jewel is the archival collection of the Summit County Historical Society, transferred to us in 2008.

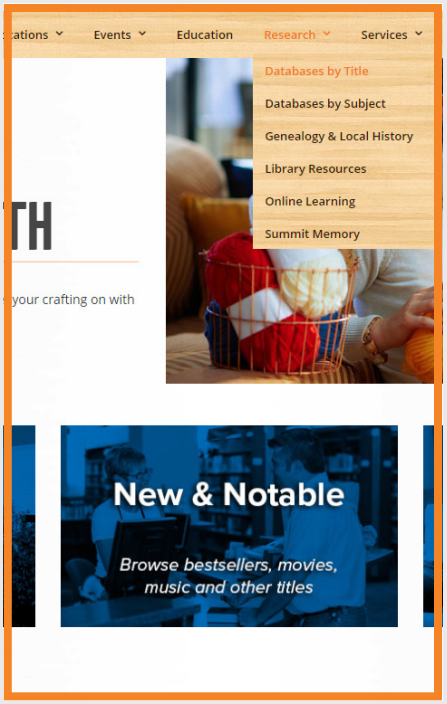
Although collecting and preserving these materials are our goals, access is our mantra. Since premiering our digital exhibit website Summit Memory in 2007 where we exhibit many digitized photographs, documents, and oral histories from the Library's collections, we have also formed partnerships with over 20 organizations that now contribute their historic and rare materials to the website. We've also created access to many of our other collections through our Archives Catalog database. With all of these efforts to provide more access for our researchers both in-person and online, we continue to share and shine a light on these remarkable collections.

Spotlight on Databases: Fold3 Library Edition

BY BARBARA LEDEN, LIBRARIAN

With millions of troops serving in conflicts in the past, chances are one of your ancestors was in the military. Military records may provide unique information on an ancestor. Fold3, owned by Ancestry.com and distributed to libraries by ProQuest, provides centralized access to many original military records including registrations, enlistments, photos, and stories. The name Fold3 is derived from the traditional flag folding ceremony, a 13-fold process. According to the National Flag Foundation, the third fold is made "in honor and tribute of the veteran departing our ranks, and who gave a portion of his or her life for the defense of our country." Fold3 contains over 500 million records and is continually growing. Records are compiled from institutions like the National Archives and Records Administration, Allen County Public Library, Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, Cuyahoga County Archives, and FamilySearch.

Fold3 can be accessed for free through the ASCPL website at any Library location or at home. You will need to have a valid ASCPL card. Go to the Library's website and hover over "Research" at the top of the page, select "Databases by Title," then scroll down to find "Fold3."



The main categories listed at the top are Home, Search, Browse, CW Stories, Memorials, and Help. On the Home page, you may choose to search records for the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Once a country is chosen, a page comprised of a grid of clickable categories appears.

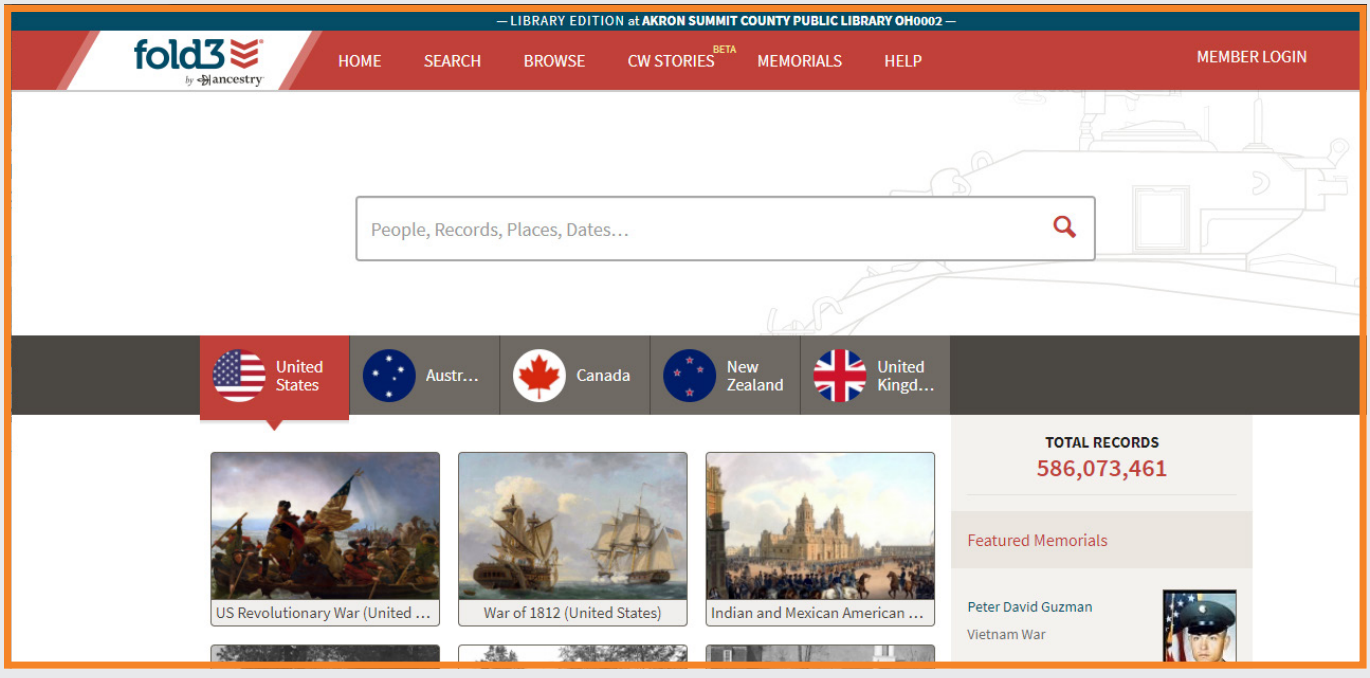
The Search option allows you to select from several categories and filter your search by keyword, name, date, place, and other options. In the Browse section you can see a list of all "publications" (data sets) that Fold3 contains.

You can narrow these down by keyword and also open individual publications to reveal their sub-categories and related images. CW Stories is a collection of information relating to the United States Civil War. Explore battles, regiments, naval history, and other information. Help is a training center that includes several tutorials on how to use Fold3.

In Memorials, the U.S. Vietnam Wall honors over 58,000 people who died or were listed as missing in the Vietnam War, and the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial honors the 1,177 people who perished with the ship in Pearl Harbor. In the U.S. Honor Wall, contributors can memorialize veterans from any U.S. conflict or peacetime service with service summaries, stories, and photos. It's also possible to create memorial pages for people, places, organizations, events, or topics. To contribute to the U.S. Honor Wall or create a memorial, you'll need to register for a free basic Fold3 membership.

Fold3 offers more than military information. The Home page includes categories of African American and Native American records as well as a Non-Military category. This features the complete 1860 and 1930 U.S. federal censuses and parts of the 1900, 1910, and 1920 censuses. The 1930 census is helpful since it has a column stating if a person was a veteran and of what conflict. Once a veteran ancestor is located on this census, it's possible to search for military information without leaving Fold3. The Non-Military category also offers city directories for large U.S. cities (including Cleveland), Nebraska homestead files, naturalization documents, Massachusetts vital records, and the published Pennsylvania Archives. For those interested in the mysterious, this category also includes Project Blue Book, a series of investigative case files on sightings of UFOs gathered by the U.S. Air Force.

With Fold3 you can explore a plethora of records to learn more about ancestors who served in the military and proudly link their service to your family tree.



Join Us for Spring Genealogy Events

"The Cultural Phenomenon of Home DNA Testing" with Libby Copeland
Saturday, May 1
10:30am – 12:30pm
Zoom

This presentation will explore the extraordinary cultural sensation of home DNA testing, which is redefining family history. It will draw on Libby Copeland's years of research for her latest book, The Lost Family: How DNA Testing is Upending Who We Are (Abrams 2020), which The Wall Street Journal calls "a fascinating account of lives dramatically affected by genetic sleuthing." With more than 35 million people having been tested, a tipping point has been reached. Virtually all Americans are affected whether they have been tested or not, and millions have been impacted by significant revelations in their immediate families. Register to receive a Zoom link.

Libby Copeland is an award-winning journalist and author, who writes from New York about culture, science, and human behavior. As a freelance journalist, she writes for such media outlets as The Atlantic, Slate, New York, Smithsonian, The New York Times, The New Republic, Esquire.com, and The Wall Street Journal.

"Advanced Genealogy Research Techniques" with Deborah Abbott
Saturday, May 22
10:30am – 1pm
Zoom

Ready to take your genealogy research to the next level? Join Special Collections for an informative program designed to help break down those brick walls. Register to receive a Zoom link.

Cluster Genealogy: Finding Your Lost Ancestor

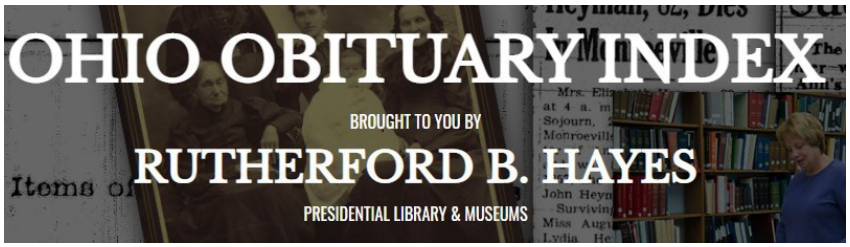
Using a case study, this session will introduce the importance of researching ancestors by using extended family members, friends, and community.

Voices from the Past: Using Manuscript Collections

Manuscript collections may be the answer to breaking your brick wall. Learn how and where to find manuscript collections and other sources that can create a gold mine of information pertaining to your ancestor.

Deborah A. Abbott, PhD. is a professional genealogist specializing in African American research, manuscript collections, and genealogy methodology. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, she presents lectures and workshops at variety of national, state, and local genealogy conferences and is an instructor at the Genealogy Research Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP) and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG). She is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and the Genealogical Speakers Guild.

Ohio Obituary Index Update: **The Reporter and Akron Jewish News**



Thanks to our large group of dedicated volunteers, last spring we were able to complete the entering of deaths information from the Akron Beacon Journal Subject Indexes (1841-1939) and Akron Beacon Journal Obituary Indexes (1937-present) into the Ohio Obituary Index.

Indexing of current Akron Beacon Journal obituaries continues to be a daily task for library staff, but we also want to extend our coverage to include other local publications. This year, we started adding obituary citations from The Reporter, the area's African American newspaper, and the Akron Jewish News. We are indexing from new issues as we receive them and from older issues as we have time.

Currently, the index includes obituaries published in The Reporter dating from 1969-1973 and 2019-present and in the Akron Jewish News from 2018-present. The Reporter issues from 1969-1999 and 2003-2018 can also be searched online.

Summit County OGS Events

19 71
OGS
Ohio Genealogical Society
Summit Chapter

Virtual meetings of the Summit County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society are open to the public. Contact the chapter at info@summitogs.org for a Zoom link. For more information on these and other events, see the chapter's Events page.

Saturday,
April 10, 2-4 PM:
Chapter meeting
"Celebrating SCCOGS' 50th Anniversary: A Trip Down Memory Lane" presented by Jane Gramlich

Saturday,
May 15, 2-4 PM:
Chapter meeting
"Maternal Failure" presented by Barb Baltrinic

Saturday,
June 19, 2-4 PM:
Chapter meeting
"Lifelong Learning: Enhancing Your Genealogical Skills" presented by Carla Cegielski

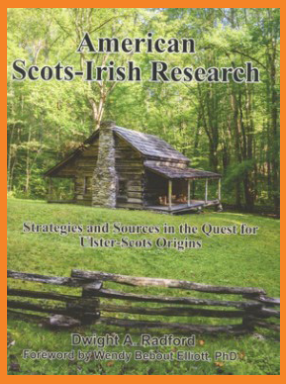
New Books

For more new books recently added to our collection that can help you with your research, be sure to see the New Books page on our website.

African American Research: A Practical Guide

Diane L. Richard

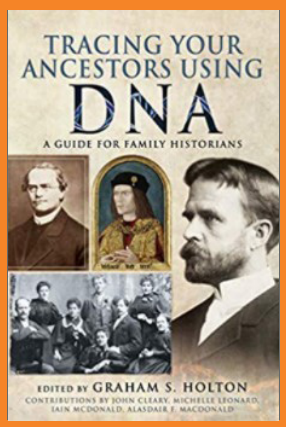
In African American Research: A Practical Guide, Diane L. Richard offers a user-friendly collection of articles explaining key record collections that are often overlooked, such as 1867 voter registrations, manuscripts, newspapers, and the Green Book. Genealogists with an interest in African American research will want to take a look at Richard's helpful advice.


American Scots-Irish Research
Strategies and Sources in the Quest for Ulster Scots Origins
Dwight A. Radford
Foreword by Wendy Bellion Elliott, PhD

American Scots-Irish Research

Dwight A. Radford

Migrating from Scotland to the historic Irish province of Ulster, the Scots-Irish are an elusive ethnic group presenting multiple research challenges. In American Scots-Irish Research, Dwight A. Radford untangles the records and strategies needed to work with these challenges. Offering no "effortless answers," he presents difficult but realistic approaches.



Tracing Your Ancestors Using DNA

Graham S. Holton

Though written for a British audience, Tracing Your Ancestors Using DNA is a useful manual explaining the principles of genetic genealogy that exist across all nationalities. Graham S. Holton devotes chapters to the science behind autosomal, mitochondrial, and YDNA testing, as well as exploring the role of DNA projects and the use of ancient DNA in historical and genealogical studies.

Akron-Summit County Public Library

PAST PURSUITS

The Akron-Summit County Library Special Collections Division is located on the third floor of the Main Library.

Special Collections
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Akron, Ohio 44326

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330.643.9030

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speccollections@akronlibrary.org

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